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HP Docket No. 10981292-2

PATENT
IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re the application of:)
Stephen L. Bass) Confirmation No.: 5093
Serial No.: 10/613,340) Art Unit: 2124
Filed: July 3, 2003) Examiner: Do, Chat, C
For: APPARATUS AND METHOD FOR) HP Docket No. 10981292-2
SHARING OVERFLOW/UNDERFLOW)
COMPARE HARDWARE IN A FLOATING-)
POINT MULTIPLY ACCUMULATE)
(FMAC) OR FLOATING-POINT ADDER)
(FADD) UNIT.)

SUBMISSION OF PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Mail Stop: Patent Application
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

In regard to the outstanding final Office Action of October 27, 2004, it appears that the Preliminary Amendment submitted along with the Request for Continuing Application under 37 CFR 1.53(b) on July 3, 2004 has not been considered.

Pursuant to instructions from the Examiner in a telephone conversation on November 24, 2004, Applicant respectfully submits a copy of the Request for a Continuing Application under 37 CFR 1.53(b), a copy of the Preliminary Amendment, a copy of the Declaration, and a copy of the Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) each of which was filed on July 3, 2003.

Applicant respectfully requests, as was indicated by the Examiner in the telephone conversation, that the outstanding Office Action of October 27, 2004 be vacated and the

HP Docket No. 10981292-2

Preliminary Amendment be entered and considered prior to the mailing of the next paper from the Patent Office.

It is not believed that extensions of time or fees for net addition of claims are required, beyond those which may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to allow consideration of this paper, such extensions are hereby petitioned under 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a), and any fees required therefor (including fees for net addition of claims) are hereby authorized to be charged to Hewlett-Packard Development Company L.P. Deposit Account No. 08-2025.

Respectfully submitted ,

**THOMAS, KAYDEN, HORSTEMEYER
& RISLEY, L.L.P.**

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PATENT
IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re the application of:)
Stephen L. Bass) Confirmation No.: 2059
Serial No.: 09/507,851) Art Unit: 2124
Filed: February 22, 2000) Examiner: Do, Chat, C
For: APPARATUS AND METHOD FOR) HP Docket No. 10981292-2
SHARING OVERFLOW/UNDERFLOW)
COMPARE HARDWARE IN A FLOATING-)
POINT MULTIPLY ACCUMULATE)
(FMAC) OR FLOATING-POINT ADDER)
(FADD) UNIT.)

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Mail Stop: Patent Application
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

In regard to the above-identified application, Applicant submits the following amendments and remarks to be respectively entered and considered prior to examination.

It is not believed that extensions of time or fees for net addition of claims are required, beyond those which may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to allow consideration of this paper, such extensions are hereby petitioned under 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a), and any fees required therefor (including fees for net addition of claims) are hereby authorized to be charged to Hewlett-Packard Development Company L.P. Deposit Account No. 08-2025.

Certificate of Mailing

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail in an envelope, with sufficient postage, addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, Mail Stop CPA, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA, 22313-1450 on 7-3-2003

Signature: Cynthia K. Dempster

AMENDMENTS

Please amend the following claims, wherein brackets ("[]") denote deletions and underlining denotes additions.

1. (Presently Amended) An exponent computation apparatus for performing an overflow ~~or~~and underflow comparisons while minimizing overflow/underflow comparison circuitry, said apparatus comprising:

overflow/underflow possible check circuitry, said overflow/underflow possible check circuitry configured to determine if a mathematical operation involving a first exponent signal and a second exponent signal creates a potential overflow condition, wherein said overflow/underflow possible check circuitry configured to generate a signal indicating if said overflow condition is a possibility; and

~~exponent compare circuitry, said exponent compare circuitry~~ configured to compute an actual overflow/underflow condition, said ~~exponent compare circuitry~~ configured to compute an actual overflow condition if said signal indicates overflow is possible, ~~and~~ said exponent compare circuitry configured to compute an actual underflow condition if said signal does not indicate overflow is possible.

2. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said exponent compare circuitry generates an error signal if an actual overflow/underflow condition exist.

3. (Original) The apparatus of claim 2, further comprising:
a pre-normalized exponent selection circuitry configured to determine a larger exponent between said first exponent signal and said second exponent signal.